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A man who has attained high prestige in the community and, in addition, has taken the head of an enemy, is asked to join *Nokwi*, the highest stage of the yam cult, and he thereby receives the greatest honor that a Kwoma man can attain. If he is able to achieve this mark of status, the final mystery of the *marsalai* is unfolded to him. He is told that the booming rhythm that he has always heard at the *Nokwi* ceremony is not the footsteps of the great female *marsalai* in whose honor the ceremony is held, but is a sound made by a huge water drum.[25] A man plants yams for the first time on the occasion of his initiation into *Nokwi* and learns from the cult members how to solicit the aid and coöperation of the *marsalai*, which are believed necessary for a successful yam crop.

The yam cult, in addition to being a mode of ranking men in accordance with their attainments and of providing a means of gaining the support of the *marsalai*, is the primary institution for artistic expression. It has been shown how the child secretly learns to play the gongs, to sing, and to dance, and how during adolescence he is formally taught these skills, first in the bush house and later at the house tamberan. During adulthood men vie with one another in demonstrating their accomplishments in these artistic techniques. A man who is superior in one or more of them gains high praise from the community; people speak of him as a *harafa ma malaka*. At the beginning of each ritual the participants examine the carved wooden figures on the altar and comment on their excellence, those who have made them standing by to receive the praise. Men who are adept at carving may expend considerable time and effort fashioning and painting the formalized wooden heads and figures which are supposed to represent the *marsalai* of the cult, in order to have them so displayed.

Men who show a talent for gong beating have the opportunity during the cult ceremonies to play the most sophisticated rhythms in the orchestra, and those who excel in com-

[25] The water drum is a hollowed log shaped like a canoe, truncated at both ends, suspended in water so that the lips are submerged, and beaten by a pole wielded by two men.

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796 posing rhythms become the orchestra leaders and may hum
794 out a new arrangement to be interpreted under their direc-
533 tions by the gong-players. "Let's try this one—'gading ga-dong, gading gadong, kura kura, kura kura',"[28] he will say, and each player must know which part his gong should take and should be able to translate the words of the leader into the proper blows on the lips of the gong at the proper moment. Usually the leader merely suggests that a named rhythm be played, if the ritual permits such a choice, or, if not, simply directs the players. Good players are permitted to play only when the gong rhythms are the central part of the ritual, and the dubs and novices take their turn when the gongs are being used primarily to accompany the dancers, so that every member of the cult has an opportunity to per-
[554] form on the gongs at some time during the ceremony. While those who play well are praised, those who are clumsy and inept are teased, criticized, and ridiculed.

796 Dancing during the cult ceremonies also provides an op-
794 portunity for a man to gain status. He may be applauded
535 either for being a tireless, or for being a spectacular, per-
554 former. The man who can dance an entire night without ever sitting down to rest and smoke is spoken of as having "dry bones" and being "hard too much." Similarly, anyone who can join the dance with fervor when it is lagging and put new spirit into the performance is highly regarded. Once at a *Nokwi* ceremony, when a dance which had been going on for several hours had begun to lag, a man who had just arrived, adorned with particularly striking face paint and decorations, rushed into the circle balancing a spear over his head, stamping his feet on the ground, and shouting. The other dancers quickly caught his enthusiasm, the tempo increased, and loiterers joined in. Spectators shook their heads, smacked their lips, and allowed that he was indeed a man of parts.

794 Singing provides another means of self-expression during
796 the ceremonies of the yam cult. The men blend their voices
533

[28] This is actually a formalized gong rhythm known as "the cassowary" and supposed to represent a hen cassowary and her chicks.

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in shouted choruses while they dance. The men of prestige sing the verses. One man will sing as many verses as he can either remember or compose and then announce that he is through by repeating the chorus, when another man continues. When no one can think of any more verses, the group dances silently until someone starts a new song. The man who can remember the most verses or who is most adept at improvising them gains considerable prestige.

Novices are not permitted to play the flutes during a ceremony, as this requires considerable skill. A pair of those who have learned one of these complicated melodies as a result of long, guided practice at the bush house are called upon to play the flutes when the ceremony calls for them. They stand facing one another each with a flute cradled over the left arm. One plays the big "male" flute, a large bamboo about seven feet long, and the other plays a "female" flute, slightly shorter and of smaller diameter.[27] Since these instruments have no stops and are therefore capable of producing only a few notes, the melodies are arranged so that the two flutes are played in series, thus permitting double the range of variation that would be possible if they were played in unison. This necessitates close coöperation between the two players, which apparently requires a great deal of practice to accomplish, and those who master it are rewarded with high praise.

The man of Rumbima hamlet who had gained most renown in the cult ceremonies was War. He could dance tirelessly though not brilliantly, he could lead a gong chorus, he was a skilled wood carver, and he could compete with anyone in the subtribe in remembering the verses of songs. The other men of Rumbima did not vie much with War, but put him forward as their champion against the high-ranking men of other hamlets. When a ceremony was given at Rumbima, it would be War who would arrange and direct it.

Even after a man has experienced the whole gamut of initiation rites, he still avoids the dwelling places of *marsalai*

[27] The "male" flute is about three inches in diameter; the "female," about two.

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portant for a man not to flinch in these circumstances, for to do so would not only mean a great loss in personal prestige, but would also be taken as an admission of guilt. The men, therefore, slowly back away from one another as the heat of the discussion cools down, or one of them will make a particularly telling remark and turn contemptuously on his heel and sit down. Their place is then taken by another speaker. Men sometimes make short comments without standing. Courts to settle a dispute usually come to a successful conclusion after everyone has aired his opinion and those less closely involved begin to discuss the matter more rationally. A meeting to discover sorcery guilt goes on endlessly, however, reconvening day after day. The Kwoma themselves admit that it is "talk nothing," but they attend, nevertheless. It gives them an opportunity to vent their hostilities, even though they seldom convict anyone.[48]

Although a Kwoma is suspicious of all foreigners, he nevertheless distinguishes between them in accordance with whether they belong to a tribe which is friendly with his subtribe or not. There is considerable trading between Kwoma subtribes and their neighbors. The Hongwam not only exchange sago flour for fish with the river tribes, but they are a link in the chain which passes shell money from the sea up the Sepik and into the interior. These shells are exchanged for pigs, tools, and carved wooden figures, and since they are difficult for the interior tribes to obtain, the Kwoma can make a profit as middlemen. Both of these forms of exchange entail visits between members of the various tribes. Furthermore, there is some intermarriage between neighboring tribes, and visiting takes place between the woman and her relatives, and Kwoma men sometimes attend ceremonies which are being held at a near-by tribe, or entertain foreigners at their own cult ceremonies. For these reasons it is advantageous for neighboring tribes to maintain sufficiently friendly relations so that these visits may take place safely. Under normal cir-

[48] Another reason for attending court is that to be absent raises suspicions of guilt.

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121 of money, hearing words of praise, receiving affection, avoiding disgusting objects, and satisfying appetites are some of the common acquired rewards which are present in our society.

121 853 The Miller-Dollard paradigm may be illustrated from the Kwoma data presented in the previous chapters. An example will be taken more or less at random from each period in the life cycle in order to elucidate the terms of the paradigm. Kwoma infants when they are hungry turn toward their mother's breast and suckle. In this case the drive is hunger; the response is turning toward the mother's breast and suckling; the cues are the sight of the mother and her breast, and the feeling of contact with her; and the reward is the ingestion of milk. From many repetitions of this sequence an infant learns the habit of turning toward the mother's breast and suckling when he is hungry in the presence of the mother.

121 862 During the weaning period a Kwoma child learns not to cling to his mother.[11] In this case the drive is pain from being pushed away and the fear of being scolded, the response is staying away from the mother, the cues are the presence of the mother, and the reward is escape from pain and reduction of fear.

121 796 858 During childhood a Kwoma boy learns to avoid the house tamberan while ceremonies are being held. The drive in this case is anxiety (he is warned that he would die if he did so); the response is avoiding the house tamberan; the cues are the sound of the gong rhythms, the statements of others that a ceremony is being held, the sight of his father, *uncles*, and older *brothers* decorating themselves; the reward is escape from anxiety. In adolescence a boy learns to carry on secret love affairs with adolescent girls. The drives are sex, sex appetite, and anxiety (sex impells him to seek girls, sex appetite leads him to choose a girl culturally defined as attractive, and anxiety impells him to do so secretly); the response is the complex of behavior which leads to and includes sexual intercourse in the bush; the cues are the sight of an attrac-

121 883 836

[11] Not to cling to his mother should be thought of as a habit of avoidance involving active responses, rather than as the absence of a habit.

121 861 or beaten by his teachers. Thus a strong habit of heeding whatever warning a teacher may issue is built up in every Kwoma individual. As a result, Kwoma teachers may warn 121 869 their pupils concerning dangers which do not exist and expect that their pupils will heed. This is in fact the case in the inculcation of supernatural beliefs. By means of warnings Kwoma teachers instill in their pupils an unrealistic fear of *marsalai*, ghosts, sorcery, and blood.[1]

[816] *Marsalai* are supposed to be huge monsters in the form of snakes or crocodiles which cause rain and wind storms, earthquakes, and other cosmic phenomena. They are supposed to 869 be present at the yam-cult ceremonies and to be responsible 776 for a plentiful yield of this crop. A child is first warned about [862] these monsters early in life. When a Kwoma mother weans her child she warns him not to suckle, lest he be injured by the *marsalai* which has now taken possession of her breast. She sometimes emphasizes this story by putting a bloodsucker [823] on her breast. During childhood a person is warned not to [821] go near or touch certain rocks and waterholes, lest the *marsalai* who dwell therein cause a storm or shoot a sago needle [796] into his foot in anger at being disturbed. He is also warned at this period not to go near the house tamberan during a cult ceremony lest the *marsalai* who are present kill him. He is told that the sounds[2] which he hears are the voices of these [778] monsters. When he is initiated at the beginning of adolescence, he is warned not to look up too suddenly at the cult figures which represent the *marsalai* lest the shock kill him.

869 775 Ghosts are believed to be the spirits of dead Kwoma who live on the outskirts of the tribal territory. Either as invisible shadows or in the form of a bird or an animal, they sometimes visit the hamlet of the living, particularly at night or when a death has occurred. It is believed that they sometimes attack a person, that they can cause accidents by frightening him, that they are eager to take souls to the land of the dead, and that they cause nightmares and fits of possession. Most warn-

[1] Kwoma have other supernatural beliefs, but these four provide the most important sources of unrealistic fear.

[2] Gongs, flutes, and bull-roarers.

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Thus, not only can the supernatural fears of pupils extinguish, but so also can the fears of the teachers become reduced in the same way, so that they no longer maintain these beliefs by sanctioning them.

The fact that Kwoma children can learn not to heed, and Kwoma parents to stop issuing and sanctioning unrealistic warnings, raises a serious question. Why does this not occur more frequently? Why, in the course of time, have not all these supernatural beliefs disappeared as a result of this process? The answer to this is suggested by one of the basic postulates of the functional theory of anthropology. Parents continue to issue unrealistic warnings and to sanction them because they form an integral part of one or more systems of beliefs, customs, and organized activities which, as a whole, satisfy a social need.[14]

The belief in *marsalai* forms a large part of the charter[15] of the yam cult.[16] *Marsalai* are believed to be present whenever this cult holds a ceremonial meeting and to bless those who participate. In playing the instruments of the cult, the members are producing a representation of the voices of these beings. After a ceremony, no man who has attended may have intercourse with his wife, because the powerful and dangerous influence of the cult *marsalai* still clings to him, and might injure her. Thus, were the belief in these monsters to disappear, the Kwoma would be forced either to provide a new *raison d'être* for their cult ceremonies or to give them up altogether. It is not necessary here to present a detailed account of the functions of the cult, but a few of them may be mentioned to show how important this institution is in Kwoma society. The most direct function of the cult seems

[14] See B. Malinowski, "The Scientific Basis of Applied Anthropology," *Reale Academia D'Italia*, XVIII (1940), 22.

[15] Every institution consists in part of the traditional purposes and reasons for its existence which are believed by the members of the personnel. Malinowski has called this the charter. See B. Malinowski, "The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (1939), 932-954.

[16] The personnel, norms, and material apparatus of this institution can be gathered from the descriptive chapters. The charter and functions are stressed here because of their importance in this context.

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to be that it provides a means of artistic expression. Cult ceremonies furnish the chief opportunity for singing, dancing, rhythmic gong beating, flute playing, and the manufacture of carved figures. Numerous important integrative functions are also fulfilled by the yam cult. It provides one of the bases for the social stratification of men, differentiating four prestige positions: boys who do not belong to the cult, members of the first stage, members of the second stage, and members of the final stage. The yam cult is closely integrated with head-hunting, in that only those who have taken a head can become members of the highest stage. The yam cult excludes women and thus helps to define their status and to maintain the division of labor by sex. Through such exclusion it provides a socially accepted means for men to express their aggressive feelings toward women. It also provides an opportunity for ceremonial license. Finally, the yam cult is associated with agriculture. The cult is thus an important institution, closely integrated into Kwoma culture, and to tamper with its charter by refusing to believe in *marsalai* is something which no pupil or teacher could lightly do.

Beliefs in *marsalai*, in addition to forming part of the charter of the yam cult, provide an explanation for cosmic events and a means of controlling them. Bad rain and wind storms, earthquakes, and rainbows[17] are thought to be produced by these monsters. These beliefs permit a Kwoma to perform certain practices which are thought to control them. In the first place he can avoid disturbing them, and in the second place he can utter an aggressive prayer which he believes will stop the storm or earthquake.[18] Thus, both because beliefs in *marsalai* form an integral part of the yam cult and because they perform other functions as well, Kwoma teachers would be very loath to cease believing in them, even if events made them skeptical of their supposed powers.

[17] Wind storms and earthquakes not infrequently destroy Kwoma dwellings and are thus seriously dangerous.

[18] It is assumed here that any activity in the face of danger is normally more reinforcing than passive acceptance, even though this activity is not effective in averting danger.

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and son, form a gardening group who coöperate to raise vegetables. The coöperative work group is composed of a man who needs help in performing some major task, such as clearing a garden site or building a house, and those of his relatives who are willing to help him in return for the feast which he and his wife must provide for them. A larger cooperative work group consisting of men from all the hamlets of the subtribe, builds a house tamberan; and the men and women of the hamlet that is benefited provide the feast. The women of a hamlet unite in informal groups to carry on what little fishing is done.

The trading group meets on appointed days once or twice a week. It is composed of women from one or more hamlets in the sib who bring sacks of sago flour, their male relatives who go to protect them and to gossip, and men and women from the river tribes who bring fish.

Warfare, too, is carried out by a definitely constituted group. The raiding party consists of adolescent and adult males from one or more subtribes who unite for a head-hunting expedition. The whole subtribe, including women and children, is mobilized to greet the returning warriors and celebrate a victory dance and hold a feast.

Kwoma culture specifies who shall perform the necessary legal functions of the tribe. The final authority in disputes between members of different hamlets in the subtribe is a court held at a neutral house tamberan and attended by adolescent and adult males from the whole subtribe. Disputes between subtribes are settled by a court of the men of both tribes meeting on neutral territory. In none of these courts are there legal specialists; each man's opinion is valued in accordance with his prestige in the community.

Religious activities are performed by the yam cult. This cult is divided into three sections: *Yenama*, *Minjama*, and *Nokwi*. Every Kwoma boy in the subtribe is elected during adolescence to either *Yenama* or *Minjama;* young men of promise are inducted into both sections. *Nokwi*, the highest stage of the cult, receives only men who are of high prestige and who have taken a head.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 14]

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869 with impunity, it would be extremely dangerous for children and women to be near the scene. In fact, a child is told that he would die if he entered the house tamberan at the time of a ceremony. Cases are cited to the children of women and children who had joined the men at this time either willfully [534] or by mistake and who had died as a result. The initiated tell the children that the gongs, trumpets, flutes, water drums, and bull roarers that they hear at the time of a ceremony are the voices of the *marsalai* who are present. Hints that these are man-made sounds come seeping down from adolescents and the careless remarks of adults, so that the child has a fairly accurate knowledge of the ceremonies before he ever participates in one. Despite his scepticism about the origin of the sounds, he nevertheless is awed whenever a ceremony takes place, and takes care not to venture near the scene. Furthermore, he takes care not to reveal to the adults that he has any suspicion of what really goes on.

869 Despite a child's awe of these meetings of the yam cult, he
• 796 senses the excitement which prevails in the whole subtribe before a ceremony takes place and eagerly looks forward to the time when he will be old enough to attend them. He hears his father, *uncles*, and *older brothers* talk excitedly about the coming event, he sees them carefully paint their faces, comb their hair, don their best ornaments, and depart for the house tamberan. Then he hears the rhythmic harmonies of the gong orchestra, the high-pitched shouting of the singers, and the weird and plaintive flute melodies. These thrilling sounds burst out sporadically during the whole day, increase in tempo and intensity as night falls, and continue unabated as long as he stays awake. Stimulated by these events, [859] Kwoma boys make toy gongs from bamboo nodes and try to imitate the gong rhythms; they hum mimicries of the ceremonial songs; and they form miniature groups to practice the shuffling dance steps. Since they are not supposed to know these things, they do them in their forest playhouse or at times when there are no adults present.

869 Parents and older siblings also warn a child not to trespass
789 in another person's garden lest he break out with boils. They

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882 eral months, he is given some instruction in gong beating and
794 flute playing, so that he may show his prowess at the coming
533 initiation. Most of the time, however, he watches those who have already been initiated, but who have not yet fully mastered the techniques, practice the complicated rhythms, and then tries to copy them.

882
796 On the day of the ceremony, the beating of the house tam-
794 beran gongs begins early in the morning. Meanwhile, the
796 boy who is to be initiated prepares himself for the event.
534 He carefully combs his hair and paints his face in the pre-
302 scribed manner. About mid-morning he is led near the house tamberan by his sponsor,[28] who warns him that when he enters the building he will see the *marsalai*, who will be on an altar in the center of the dance floor. The sponsor especially warns the initiate not to look up at the altar too quickly lest the shock kill him. The lad is then left waiting with other boys who are to be initiated while the sponsor goes to tell the men already there that the initiates are about to appear. At this, the gongs, flute playing, and singing cease abruptly, and the men prepare to produce special sound effects to impress the initiates. The sponsor returns for his initiate and leads him up to the house tamberan. A screen of sago fronds hides the inside of the building from view. Gongs and flutes burst into a deafening roar as the initiate is made to stoop and enter an opening in the screen. The sponsor holds the initiate by the arm and dances with him around the altar. The men shout and dance around with them. The gong beaters and flutists play wildly. Someone just outside the house tamberan whirls a bull-roarer, and the sponsor shouts in the boy's ear that its sound is that of the wings of a *marsalai*. For the first two rounds the boy keeps his eyes fixed on the ground; then his sponsor tells him to look up at the altar, where there is a stylized representation of a human head carved from wood and painted with designs in black and white. The boy is told that this too is a hoax, that it is made

[28] I am not sure how a boy's sponsor is determined. In any case, he is a member of the appropriate cult section and of the parental generation.

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of wood, but that the secret must be carefully guarded from the women and children. The sponsor then thrusts a roasted yam into the boy's hand and leaves him to dance by himself in the circling ring of men as he eats it.

The boy's dream of participating in the cult ceremonies is thus finally realized. From now on he may take his turn in the gong orchestra, taking care not to make a mistake lest he be shouted at and teased by the older men, and hoping to gain their praise for a perfect performance. Although adolescents are usually only permitted to beat the gongs while the simpler rhythms are being played, those who have shown a special aptitude during the practice sessions and who make no mistakes during their first few performances at the house tamberan may be permitted to try their hand at more complicated rhythms. Although few adolescents gain the skill necessary for a public performance on the flutes, they can put to use the secret dance practices of their childhood as they skip around the altar, their hands above their heads, their eyes on the wooden figures, and their bare feet rhythmically slapping the earth floor in unison with the other dancers. They may also join in the chorus which the dancers shout after each of the song leader's verses. Finally, they may squat with the adults as they drop out of the dance to smoke cigarettes, chew betel, and gossip.

The unfolding of the hoax of the cult does not destroy a Kwoma boy's belief in *marsalai;* it simply verifies his suspicion that the *marsalai* do not palpably visit the house tamberan at the time of the cult ceremonies. He still believes in the existence of these supernatural beings and does not doubt that they live in their special dwelling places and cause storms or "shoot" sago needles when they are disturbed. He is also impressed with the fact that these *marsalai* are responsible for a successful yam crop, and that the chief purpose of the yam cult ceremony is to insure their coöperation in producing a bountiful harvest.

An adolescent reacts toward his younger *brothers* in much the same way as he did during childhood. Indeed, a specific

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224 [859] strangled by hand or are snared by means of a running noose tied to the end of a stick. A man sometimes constructs a small deadfall trap in the granary or dwelling to catch stray rats, but more frequently he sets a hunting dog on these pests.

224 262 [826] If a man does not use a bow and dart or spear to kill small animals, the belief about his blood does not strictly apply. He may eat them without harm. Many Kwoma, however, do not take the chance of eating something which has been killed even in this way, and give the meat to some other member of their family.

224 703 237 223 Opossums and birds of paradise are exceptions to the lack of interest in small game. A man may expend considerable effort hunting these, not because of their food value, but because they yield homicidal insignia. A man who has taken the head of an enemy is permitted to wear a band of opossum fur on his forehead and bird of paradise plumes in his comb. Hence a man who already has the privilege of wearing such insignia eagerly seeks them, and one who does not yet have the privilege seeks them to use in the future or to give to a *brother* or *uncle*.

252 593 885 Processing sago is a continual chore for Kwoma adults of both sexes. The technique which they master during adolescence has been described in the preceding chapter. The only change which occurs at adulthood is that the work group is composed of a man and his wife rather than of a brother and his sister. The habits of processing sago are maintained by the family's need for an everyday supply of sago flour, for a surplus to be traded with the river people for fish, and for contributions to necessary work bees and ceremonial feasts.

[439] [476] [496]

226 462 [591] [433] [487] An adult woman continues to fish as she did during her adolescence and childhood. Since marriage is patrilocal, she fishes in a new locale with the women of her husband's hamlet. The main fish supply comes from trade; consequently fishing is only a supplementary occupation in an economic sense and is engaged in primarily for recreation.

222 462 A woman supplements the larder with edible produce from the forest. She collects the leaves of certain wild trees for use as greens; she searches in the dead butts of sago palms for

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protectors. With regard to these affairs the Kwoma take the attitude that they are discreditable only if discovered. Every man knows that his wife is probably unfaithful to him, but unless he is extremely jealous he does not spy on her and punishes her only if she is indiscreet enough to be conspicuous. 837

There are two occasions of ceremonial sexual license. One occurs during the yam-cult ceremonies. As described in the previous chapter, the yam cult is divided into two sections, *Y'enama* and *Minjama*, and every Kwoma male is initiated into one or the other of these sections at pubescence. When the cult holds a ceremony, the *Y'enama* dance on the first day and night, and the *Minjama* on the second. On the afternoon of the first day, the married women of the tribe dance in the clearing on one side of the house tamberan. They bring with them net bags which are decorated on one side only. These they hold above their heads as they dance with the decoration either toward them or away from them, depending on whether their husband belongs to *Y'enama* or *Minjama*, and the men note the information thus given. Taking advantage of the fact that all the *Y'enama* men will be at the house tamberan that night, the *Minjama* visit their wives. The *Y'enama* have a chance to retaliate on the following night when the *Minjama* men are dancing. The second occasion for ceremonial sexual license occurs during one of the nights of the age-grade initiation ceremonies when the men and women dance together at the house tamberan. During the dance, the women slip tokens to the men of their choice as a sign that they are willing to have intercourse with them, and the couples unobtrusively drop out of the dance and repair to the bush. For several days before and after these occasions of license, salacious jokes and sly boasting are rife. The taboo on sexual relations between relatives operates with respect to all extramarital affairs. 794 796 786 [835]

When a man has children, daughters appear as a new interdicted category of women. The following myth represents the Kwoma horror of such a relationship and the intensity of guilt associated with breaking this incest taboo. 835

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591 and since it is difficult to get helpers to leave their own work
342 for more than one day at a time, housebuilding is usually
476 slow. A year or more often elapses between setting the cen-
[351] tral post and lashing the final shingle in place. A young
married man chooses a level plot near his father's house for a
[593] site. Sometimes two brothers will build a house together and
share it, but more often each builds one of his own. Since
the thatched houses at Kwoma do not last indefinitely, a man
usually has to build several during the course of his lifetime.
[888] Old men live in their houses until these become too dilapi-
dated to give adequate shelter, and then move in with one of
their sons.

885 Toward dangers from the natural environment, the Kwoma
781 adult behaves in much the same way as he did during adoles-
[224] cence. He is somewhat more bold in coping with dangerous
animals, particularly wild pigs, for he now begins to hunt
them. He still respects supernatural dangers and heeds the
warnings issued during the previous periods of his life con-
cerning *marsalai*, ghosts, and sorcery.

885 As an adult, a man may come in closer contact with *mar-*
156 *salai* by joining the second stage of the yam cult. If he gains
794 enough prestige by aggressively defending his rights, if he
796 shows himself to be a good worker, if he becomes adept at
554 one of the ceremonial accomplishments such as singing, gong
beating, flute playing, or dancing, if, in fine, he shows prom-
ise of becoming a "big older brother man," he will be asked
to join the other section of the yam cult.[24] If he does so, the
initiation ceremony is less formal than was his first entry into
the house tamberan at adolescence. He learns definitely at
this time that the opposite section is similar to his own, dif-
fering only in minor variations in ritual and paraphernalia.
Thenceforth he has the privilege of attending either or both
of the ceremonies, a gain in prestige, in rapport with the
marsalai, and in opportunities for singing, dancing, and
feasting.

[24] The yam cult, it will be remembered, is in two sections, *Yenama* and *Minjama*. Every male is elected into one or another of these sections during adolescence. If a boy enters *Yenama* during adolescence, the next step is to become a member of *Minjama*, and vice versa.

372 brittle wood, dead and somewhat wormeaten. They break the wood in length varying from two to four feet and place it on the ground radially from a center. The fire burns only at the end of the logs with practically no flame or smoke, but with intense heat. As the logs burn, they are pushed toward the center of the fire. I can't decide whether it is the type of wood or the arrangement of it that produces such a fire.

114 I put some potatoes in the oven to bake and then some time later asked Kumb where the pigeon was. He had shot one the night before, and I had mentioned that I was going to roast it. He had thought I was kidding evidently, for it was already in his pot over the open fire. This was somewhat disconcerting, but as it turned out to be very tasty--probably more so than my attempt would have been--he couldn't but be forgiven. Kumb is a good cook. Since it was very hot after lunch, Tip and I both lay down, read, and dozed.

796 Today was the first day of the "singsing". Before we had finished breakfast, the gongs began beating. Soon after we finished eating and had treated the sores of a couple of youths that had come in, we started off to observe the ceremony. We were accompanied by Kar and Kumb who volunteered to show us the way. They led us down the north side of the mountain almost [123]

346 to the edge of the sago plain--about a mile from our house. When we arrived, a couple of the "finish timers" came out and escorted us into the house tamberan.

The roof is arched; the ridgepole slants from the back to the front, where an extension overhangs the front of the building. The roof form is the same as the Purari delta type, but the building is not on piles. In the center of the house tamberan was an altar formed from a pile of yams and taro enclosed in a diamond-shaped kind of wicker basket. It was

346 slightly larger at the top and about three-and-one-half feet high. It gave the impression of the hull of a very high and stubby ship sailing
346 parallel to the long axis of the house. At each end were two large carved
532 wooden figures standing upright. These figures had shuttle-shaped bodies of feather work with no representation of arms, legs or wings. The feathers were slate blue and resembled those of the gouria pigeon; they were arranged similarly to their natural state on the bird. The head of each figure was a carved face about one and one-half feet high and nine inches broad. Rather than full figure, the carving was more similar to relief work. The cheeks were hollow rather than rounded and gave the impression of a dish face. The nose was disproportionately long and pointed, the mouth small and round. The entire face was painted in black, white, and red. In addition to these two masks or statuettes, others were distributed around the edge of the basket. Their size varied, but all of them were smaller than the figures at each end of the basket. Some of them had featherwork bodies, others no bodies, and one a wooden body roughly shaped and representing a female. In addition, the whole alter was decorated with red berries and yellow leaves attached here and there.

796 When we entered the building the "finish timers" crowded around us
123 and warned us that the "singsing" was a ceremony for adult men only and that
[562] we must not say anything about it to either the women or children. We
[858] were also warned not to mention it to the Patrol officer, or they might
[648] get in trouble. (The government has no policy of restricting such ceremonies except when they are directly connected with head hunting). The main purpose of the peroration seemed to be to impress us with the importance of the
[532] affair. We were then led up to the alter and shown each of the figures,

796
532 and told to whom they belonged. The two large ones belonged respectively
[123] to the "tultul" and the "lulusi" (pidgin for the native government repre
sentative and the village head man). We exclaimed over them and told them
they were "number one".

796 While we were being shown the figures a dance was in progress around
535 the alter. About half of the natives there were shambling around it,
[533] sometimes stepping from side to side in time to the beating of the gongs
[534] and sometimes merely walking, depending on whether or not the spirit moved
them. Sometimes everyone would be dancing; at all times at least two
of them were. The step was a sort of springy goose step, the beat emphasized
with a pause by the down-treading on one foot with the other in the air.
The raised foot was sometimes brought across in front of the other one, and
sometimes behind. In either case, the toes were pointed outward, and the
raised foot scraped along the ground. Coincident with the stepping, the
[415] body was twisted from side to side, particularly the shoulders. Practically
[276] all of the men held their betel gourds under their left arms and were
constantly dipping the spatulas in and sucking on them. Occasionally one
of the dancers would pick up a net bag (empty except for a withe inserted
around its edge to make it stiff and feelike), hold it above his head
either in one or both hands, and twist it back and forth in harmony with
the contortions of his body. The dancers would drop in and out of the dance
at will, have a rest, smoke, take their turn at beating the gongs, and then
return.

796 For clothes, the older men wore nothing except arm and leg bands
291 (and not all of them wore these); necklaces of dogs' teeth; shell; hair
301 ornaments of feathers and combs; or a combination of these. Most of the
"finish timers" wore laplaps or shorts; one of them wore a laplap over his

796 usual costume of an old bathing suit. The faces of practically all of
291 them were smeared with black paint, particularly on their eyebrows, and in
301 lines on their forehead. On some a narrow line of black was drawn along
[302] the hairline, framing the face.

796 In time to the dancing and the beating of the gongs, a chant was sung.
533 One of the dancers would start a short verse sung in a high monotone. It was spoken very rapidly, and I could not take it down very well. One verse sounded like ranyuliyuliyuliyuliyo. At the end of the verse everyone shouted in chorus wuyo or suyo, with a prolongation and accent on the first syllable. It was shouted on a lower note than the verse; the second syllable was even lower than the first. After two or three verses, there was a longer chorus which started with suyo sung twice, followed by a sort of chant of wahowaho, dadohoho, or hahohowo that was sung on a higher note than those with the vowel "o". After this longer chorus, they would lapse into silence for a moment, and the gongs would stop beating; but usually after only a few seconds, someone would start another song. After one person had started a verse, the others would join in. Some people were dancing almost constantly, more fervently than others; everyone, however, participated at some time.

796 There were six large gongs (logs) ranging from about eight feet long
534 and two feet in diameter, to half that size, lying around the sides of the house. The logs had been hollowed out in roughly the same manner as a canoe although the shell was much thicker, and usually only one end was pointed and carved. The slit on top was about six inches wide and about
[532] three quarters the length of the log. The carving was a rough representation of a crocodile. The beaters were round pieces of wood about a foot long

796 and four inches in diameter. They were not ornamented. The usual method
534 of beating the gong was to stand at right angles to it, the right side of the body next to the gong, a beater held in either hand. The gong was pounded near, but on either side of the slit, the beater striking endwise. This method was, however, by no means universal, for sometimes the drummer would stand facing the gong, or sit on it and idly tap with the side of the beater. The most usual and accepted method was the former; the latter the most informal. There were also several intermediate methods.

796 The rhythm consisted of accented beats and unaccented beats in alter-
533 nation. At each gong one of the drummers would pound out the accented, another the unaccented beats. Further, each gong would produce the rhythm of one accented and three unaccented beats. These beats were alternated among the gongs so that the accented beat of one gong would fall on the middle unaccented beat of another gong. Thus -/---/---/--- and ---/---/---/ would result in -/-/-/-/, (total effect). The rhythm of the gongs was more or less followed by the singers and dancers. This rhythm was not the only one employed, and Tip says that even it is not right. That is something we will have to check up on.

796 We stayed there and observed until just before noon. The dancing
123 and singing had been continuous until this time and then the dancers stopped for something to eat. We all went out into the small clearing in front of the house tamberan. In front of us was a line of coconut trees and beyond that a short drop, and then the sago swamp. On our left was a path
349 coming down the mountain, and on the right, jungle growth. In the left hand corner of the clearing and on the further side from where we stood another construction had been built. It was a representation of a ship with a mast, laddered rattlins, and crabclaw sails represented by two

349 [179] coconut fronds, standing up. They claimed that this was an innovation brought in by the "finish timers"; perhaps it has replaced some other element in their culture. It is interesting to note that Bateson took a picture, printed in Oceania, which is very reminiscent of this.

123 262 We first were given a coconut, the milk of which we drank. The natives were eating sago, pig, and roast sago grubs. After a while it was suggested that if we wanted to eat "food belong kanaka" we could. They did it in a way so that we could have refused had we wished, but seemed as though they would be flattered if we accepted. I remember reading several accounts of similar situations described by ethnographers and travellers where they had eaten some outlandish food, as they said, to avoid insulting the natives. I feel that if we had refused, they might have been mildly hurt, but not insulted. The sago was handed to us wrapped in a leaf--a gelatinous globule. It was absolutely tasteless, and I did not find it very pleasant. I don't think Tip did either. Neither of us finished our helping, but gave them to some of the natives who were glad to finish them for us. The roast grubs were really quite good, but despite myself, I was a bit disgusted--not so much, however, that I didn't get down a goodly number of them.

796 123 After dinner the dancing recommenced as before, and shortly thereafter we were told to leave. We were each given a coconut and a yam as a parting gift, told that the singsing would continue all night, but that it was taboo to us. [417] The next day someone was going to build a screen across the front of the [346] house tamberan so that the women, and uninitiated children who would come into the [398] front courtcould not see the sacred altar.

796 123 Three of four of the natives followed up the hill, carrying the coconut and yams for us. When they got to the top they begged us for some red paint, so we gave them a half-full tobacco tin, and they returned to the singsing. The drumming and singing continued all afternoon and at least as long as we were awake that evening. It was quite effective while we were lying in bed listening to it.

October 16,1936

123 Yesterday Wisep went to Yambon (a Sepik river village) and returned with three ducks to supply [797] a few eggs for us. He also brought back his wife and child. The wife has [91] spent some time at a mission somewhere, speaks pidgin and wears European [39] clothes. She seems to have quite alot of natural dignity. [177]

126 194 We worked on language both yesterday and today, correcting and revising. We have a workable set of phonemes which are by no means final, but which seem to coincide with the evidence that we have. For vowels we have found i, e, ɨ, o, u and ɛ . Consonants b, d, g, (lenis and unaspirated) m, n, v (bilabial) s, š , y, j, l and ər. The unvoiced complements of some of these are found in whispered syllables; quite a few of these syllables are found in the final position. The general structure of the language seems to be cvcvcvCV. 126 193 Length and stress seem to vary together. We have recorded the names of the various parts of the body, and quite a few everyday objects; a few of the more common verbs and some of their variant forms. The word order seems to be noun-adjective-verb. There are singular, plural, and dual pronomial forms which vary when used subjectively or objectively. Subject precedes object. Ma is the imperative particle, nagə expresses negation. We have not been able to make much sense out of tenses yet.

114 Yesterday the houseboys dug a garden and we planted some sweetcorn, watermelon, beets and lettuce. Let's hope it comes up.

123 Toward evening about a dozen of the natives had gathered around our
526 house and we went out to talk to them. Soon we were idly tossing stones.
They threw by stiffly rocking their whole bodies back and holding their
wrists stiff. They did bend their elbows, however. None of them could
throw as far as either Tip or I, but their accuracy at short distances was
amazing. Approximately every other shot would hit a small sapling about
twenty yards away.

114 While Tip and I were playing cribbage just before supper, it began to
132 rain-- a downpour with quite a strong wind. The house began to leak in
various unsuspected places, particularly right over my head, where it came
through with a gush and startled me. The storm lasted about half an hour when
the wind shifted and the rain stopped. The wind is very peculiar here. It
will blow up very strongly for about a minute and then will drop to almost
an absolute calm for another minute.

796 Yesterday was supposed to be the second day of the singsing, but in the
764 morning Mar came to tell us that it had been postponed because someone had
died the night before. He was a young man who had been sick for quite a while.
We did not think it wise to be too inquisitive, but found out that he had not been
buried, but "hung up". The singsing began again today however.

796 During breakfast we heard the gongs and chanting start, so we ate
[114] quickly and started down the hill. By this time the drumming and singing had
stopped.

796 When we reached the house tamberan, several of the natives greeted us
346 and shook our hands. Everyone talked with a hushed voice, explaining to us that
778 the singsing had not yet begun. We were led up to the altar which had been
[123] rearranged since the previous day of the singsing. It was in the shape of an
inverted truncated cone about four feet high constructed from net bags stretched

796 around a framework. At the front and back ends, tilting toward the center,
346 were two huge masks, about four feet long and a foot wide. They were
708 beautifully carved and painted in black, white , red, and green. At the
[532] top of each mask was fastened what looked like feather work, a semblance of
[237] hair. Capping this were plumes similar to those worn by the dancers themselves.
The mask near the front was called <u>seambwaré</u>, and belonged to Waskuk (an old man of Waskuk actually owned it); the one at the rear was called <u>abémakwa</u> and belonged to Bangua (actually to the cicatriser). The space between the masks on the top of the altar was covered with shell ornaments. A pumpkin seed shaped ornament of small cowrie shells fastened in rows on a woven or closely netted fabric was called <u>sawémaré</u>. Another was similarly constructed, but shaped as a crocodile, with two larger shells for eyes, and called <u>no maski</u> (no means crocodile). Plumes, cockatoo, pigeon, etc, were set in various
[535] places in addition to bit of yellow grass hung in bunches. Some of the dancers also wore this same yellow grass stuck into their arm and leg bands.

796 The front of the house tamberan had been hidden from view by a 6½' screen.
346 While it prevented the women and children from seeing the sacred precincts,
417 the men could and did stand up on the framework of the screen to look out onto the other side. The women and children were not to come until the next day, but some of the men, at least one anyway, were on the women's side. We did not dare look over the screen for fear of breaking some taboo.

796 After a few minutes, we were escorted to some seats (planks that had been
533 hewn from 2' x 6' x 8" logs, and roughly carved), and told that the singsing
[123] would begin soon. Some of the natives began to walk slowly and silently around
[352] the altar while the "luluai" of Bangua, (one of the Kwoma hamlets) Sowinambi, began a verse in a high voice which ended in a prolonged <u>o</u> on the same note and fell off to a <u>wi</u> with shorter duration, on a lower note. This verse was answered from the other side of the screen in exactly the same manner, but with different words to the verse.

796 Finally everyone joined in and the o wi was repeated three times. After about
533 ten more minutes of this, the tempo increased and a wierd rumbling sound was
534 made by the beaters of the drums being scraped inside the lips of the gongs.
Then the dancers picked up flutes and blew them, and bull roarers were whirred
just outside the house tamberan. One man made a wierd sound by blowing a flute
inside one of the gongs. All these various sounds gradually increased in
intensity to produce a very effective climax which was capped by the sudden
beating of the gongs and a shuffling dance and chorus similar to the previous
session of the singsing. The verses were still being sung in alternation by
[177] the lulusi and the people on the opposite side of the screen. It was interesting
that one of the dancers had a ten cent store tin flute which he piped very
seriously while dancing and skipping about. Several of the dancers held their
hands above their heads and kept facing one or another of the masks and gazing
at it very intently.

123 During the dancing one of the "savvy talks" came and sat by us, told us not
796 to tell the "kiap" (Verey) where the three Waskuks who had run away from a
648 plantation were hiding. Verey had tried to get them when he came up with us, but
they 'went bush' and stayed there. I suppose some of them were at the singsing
and were afraid of being told on. We assured the "savvy talk" that we would not
give them away. We told him that we did not belong to the government but that
we belonged to the Waskuk. Tip said he was a Bangus and that I was a Waskuk.* This
pleased them very much and soon it was repeated to everyone.

796 Again, as for the previous ceremony, at about noontime they stopped for
264 food. There were two separate meals; one was of yams and coconuts, and the
262 other sago, grubs and pig. There seemed to be some kind of taboo working which
prevented some people from eating one meal and others the second. Some people,

* It is difficult to guess what was understood by this since Bangus was a neighboring hamlet in contrast to Rumbina, the one in which we lived, whereas Waskuk was the name of the tribe; we were under the impression at this time that Bangus was the name of another tribe.

796 however, partook of both. Tip and I tried the yam-coconut combination--
264 mashed yams with hunks of coconut mixed in-- which was really pretty good. It
[262] was served in a halved coconut shell accompanied by a European spoon. When
123 the other meal combination was brought to us, to avoid repeating the previous
[177] experience, we said the second type meal was taboo to us. This was another good joke which was repeated around the house tamberan.

796 After the meal was over we were again given a coconut and a couple of
123 yams and told to go home. One of the "savvy talks" carried the gifts for us. The singsing continued all that afternoon, evening and ended the next
[562] morning. The women and children had come, we were told, in the afternoon
859 soon after we had left, and remained there until the end.

It is not too good to be sent away in the middle of things, but I feel that by the time they have another singsing we will perhaps have their confidence enough to be given more freedom. I think they are a little mistrustful of white men after the shooting episode in 1928.

October 18, 1936.

114 Yesterday was spent around the house, working on language with various
[122] informants who came to see what was going on. It is coming slowly but surely. Late in the afternoon we went for a bath. We have discovered a pool in the little stream across the valley. It is about a mile away-- a journey of precarious footing up and down the mountain, but nevertheless, pretty nice once we get there. The pool is a hollow worn in the rock at the bottom of a little waterfall, about three feet deep in places, and affords a combination of shower and bath. The water seems very cold, but much to our amusement, we found it to be 78° when we checked.

114 stationed at Ambunti) were very gracious to us. We relaxed, talked, played cards, and read. Tip went back Monday, but Max persuaded me to stay at the station until the sores on my legs were cleared up. I had gathered quite a number of these by scratching mosquito bites until they became infected. The sores were not bad, but Max was afraid that they might turn into tropical ulcers if they were not attended to. By Thursday I was completely cured and already had my luggage packed in the canoe when the gongs began beating at Malu, a couple of miles down the river, announcing a pinnace. I decided to wait in case there might be more mail. It was Townsend, the District Officer in charge of the whole Sepik area making a patrol of the sub-stations. Soon after he arrived another pinnace arrived. It was bringing Purshouse, a cadet who was to accompany Townsend up the river to the Yellow River station. Counting McKechnay, the engineer of Townsend's pinnace, that made six Europeans at the station--quite a remarkable occurrence. Max and George had to combine resources to seat us all that night for dinner. The mail situation was disappointing--only three Sydney papers and the September issue of the Pacific Island Monthly. I got a ride on the pinnace up to the lake below Waskuk. They towed my canoe; it was a much more comfortable mode of travel. Once, however, the pinnace turned suddenly to avoid a log, and the canoe filled with water and almost swamped. I held it up by the tow rope while the natives bailed it out. My luggage, however was soaked, but there was no serious damage.

796 November 9, 1936. Tip was in good health when I returned. There had been a 346 singsing while I was gone to celebrate the building of a new house tamberan. 346 (I will copy his notes) " The new house tamberan belongs to Soniyambi of the yuvimbeyi sib at Bangwa. It may be said to start when the i'nik' center posts (kwatf) and beams and rafters are cut and stripped of their

346 bark at the foot of the mountain months before the final ceremony. Sago fronds are next cut and made up into 3' square shingles (ndup), which are stacked in piles around the clearing. The task of cutting and carrying [483] the materials is no small one. Many men are needed to lift and set the center posts in place. Some men push with forked sticks, others hold the pole in the hole dug to receive it, and another crew pulls on lines (wankí) fastened high up on the pole. The new house tamberan replaces an older and smaller one which stands stripped of its maratta inside the new one. The staging will stand until the ornamentation of the ends of beams has been finished.

796 346 "The day for the ceremony of dedication draws closer. It is finally set for the next day. The uninitiated boys sing and dance in anticipation, [202] for they will be allowed to go. The night before the maratta is to be fastened for good, gongs sound, giving official word to what everyone [533] seems to know already. In the morning the young men will fix the maratta [192] to the refrain of a hogwaswit (A leader sings a sentence and the workers answer with a long drawn out and falling owi.)

"As I approach, the young men are discovered perched like birds on the ridge pole. The hogwaswit reaches the coda. After singing three lines all together, the work is, for the time being, finished. I am told that this is a distinctly different singsing from the one we witnessed at the harvest [462] of the yams. Women are not present as the fastening is going on, but it [614] isn't taboo to them--merely men's work. All the sibs of Waskuk and Bangus are represented and seem to mix indiscriminately. The Waskuk lulunai, Marak is seated with a group of men in a little temporary house tamberan which houses the gongs. They tell me he is "cross" with the young Waskuk for joining the singsing so he starts one of his own with gongs in opposition.

796 346 [192] This is a 'singsing nothing' (hongwaiiw). It seems to be a ceremonial anger, for in a very few minutes I am told "he no got cross now", but the singsing keeps on in two groups, both singing different songs.

"Sowinambi comes up to me, taps his chest, and says, 'enji korumpé' (my sib). There are two hand prints on the first kwatí as high as a man can reach. These were made by Sowinambi who put black paint on his hands and left his prints, right and left--one hand for Waskuk, one for Bangus. [177] (This is an innovation introduced by finish-timers who have signed contracts with their fingerprints.)

"In the center of the new structure there are three wooden slat beds. Around one are gathered a half a dozen men who are holding a small ritual. There are three men who stand out as leaders: War, Sowinambi, and Hogwat, [537] representing the Rumbima, Wenyebankura, and Duwus sibs respectively. Each of these three takes a turn and sing-speaks as fast as he can until he forgets, or gets tongue-tied, or stops. War and Hogwat throw themselves [535] into it more than Sowinambi who stands quietly. The former two dance and [533] sway and gesticulate as they lead. The others and a few sitting close by on logs sing the awi chorus. In the midst of this some of the 'finish timers' and older men are indulging in a little rough horseplay consisting of sprinkling lime over the singlets or bare chests of each other. Old wrinkled 'leathernack' greets a middle aged man whom he sees sitting on a log, by approaching him and rubbing his limegourd on the other's jaw. The gesture is returned. Men are sitting in the house tamberan on sticks or logs because the ground is still soft and muddy. It has not been packed down by many feet as in the older house tamberans.

"At about two P.M. the sun breaks through the heavy fog which has held through the morning. Sowinambi passes the word for food to be brought.

796 346 [262] [562] A few women, one of them Sowinambi's mother, come bringing bags full of pots and coconut shell dishes and parcels of boiled sago, which the women have made, but will not eat. The old woman digs holes with a stick into which the men set their round bottomed pots. Another keeps flies from the sago and roast pig which have been laid out on large pieces of bark. Sowinambi has supplied the food which the women bring. He takes the first barkload and puts it down in the center of the clearing. There are two courses - - (1) boiled yam and coconuts and boiled red berries, and (2)hot water"sac sac" and roast pig. Other men then assist in carrying over the food. The food is arranged in groups of four or five barkloads each. Each group is set apart for a particular sib. Many men take part in the division, giving advice and carrying, but Sowinambi directs. When the division is finished, the men and 'monkis' gather about the dishes by sibs and start to eat. An odor reminiscent of Gloucester seeps about. Sowinambi sits beside me at the fire.

796 264 [362] [614] [231] He is not eating. There are low stuffy murmurs of conversation broken frequently by the yelps of hungry dogs who have received cracks over the backsides with the handle of an axe or a good kick. The handful of women linger at the edge of the clearing stuffing their baskets with the utensils used for the first course of yams and red berries. This course is finished in not more than five minutes. Men carry the bark scallops to the edge of the clearing where crumbs are dumped out. Food which remains is bound up in larger or smaller parcels of banana leaf to be taken home when the singsing is finished.

796 346 [562] [251] "The men return to the 'singing' and gong beating for the rest of the afternoon. At sundown the women and children arrive. They all go in the house tamberan--women along the side, men in the center. Singing and dancing keeps up all night. At about eight A.M. a party of the leaders

796 346 comes by going home to sleep. This day is for rest. Tomorrow the singsing will go on to its conclusion."

The "singsing" did not go on, however. It was postponed because one of 755 754 the Bengus men was very sick, and all attention was turned to beating the [796] gongs against poison. This was going on when I returned along with a lot of talk about the evils of poison, and not knowing what the place was coming to with so much of it being practiced. Two men have died within [123] a month, and now another one from the same sib is about to go. Tip went to look at this man before we went to Ambunti and gave him some quinine. The [753] next day he was better, and we thought he was cured. It seems, however, that the natives are so sure that he is poisoned that they are turning their attention to it rather than asking for more medicine.

[752] The poison situation was further aggravated by the fact that two days ago a young "monki" from Waskuk was cutting wood with his father and a tree fell on him and crushed his skull. He is still alive, but there is no hope for him. The natives recognize this as an accident, but now the Waskuk gongs are beating against poison. We have had no direct evidence that we [123] are considered responsible for the bad luck that seems to have hit the tribe, but it would be peculiar if some did not think that we were the cause of it. They always deny this if directly questioned. Last night Kum told Wis not to allow any old men into his house or he might be poisoned. This is all a very interesting situation, and when we know the language a little better, we can understand more about it.

114 November 10, 1936. Yesterday afternoon we were sitting out in front of our [372] house with a group of natives. [We have fixed up a small courtyard there and built a little fire in the center of it, for this seems to be an essential part of a native gathering. They use it to dry their tobacco and light their cigarettes.]

126 and the men are averse to having pictures taken of their more esoteric ceremonies. Some of the women had a "cross" on with me a while ago for taking a lot of photos of their trading with Yambon. They seem to have a sense of shame at their nakedness.

Developing our negatives is a risky business. By rising before six we can usually get our solutions to 70°F. But once we start to develop, we are at the mercy of the weather. If a mist sets in, it is likely to last all morning so that is takes an entire day for the negatives to dry as they should.

(Again Tip).

796 December 17th, 1936./The nokwi sugwi which we attended a week ago today was a banner occasion. We had heard it called, in pidgin, "singsing bilong meri", so we were ready for anything up to ceremonial rape. The morning was cold and rainy and only a few men were at the house tamberan beating the huge gong. We had arranged to go down to Abagalis with War, but we had [302] to wait about half an hour while he 'dressed'. This consisted of smearing [301] his body with a sticky oil, drawing a black band with charcoal around the hair line of his face, carefully painting his face with ochre powder, putting on broad shell-washer arm bands and a tiny rope of shells across the forehead, and finally sticking a bird of paradise 'duster' in his hair.

During this process we talked with War's brothers who are "finish-timers" of our age. These lads are still too young to go to this ceremony. What the qualifications are we do not know, but have an idea that the members [417] fulfill the homicide qualification. When we arrived at Abagalis we found that a high fence of sago fronds had been erected around the clearing at the north end of the house tamberan. Near the center was a 10' x 3' pit [534] dug in the ground and half filled with water. In the water suspended by both ends was what we will call a water gong. It is made of the good

796 [534] sized trunk of a tree hollowed out and open at both ends. It is hung bottom up in the water and struck with a long heavy post wielded by two men.

The outline of another similar pit which has been filled in was seen beside the one now in use. This I was told had leaked badly. The new one has to be filled from any of several bamboo containers stuck under the 'banif' quite often.

[346] [778] In the house tamberan there is the same altar set up in the center with a small amount of shell money, two stubby bamboo flutes, and a wooden [538] [532] trumpet on top. Above it rises a 3' carved wooden figure of a woman. This [614] is the woman for whom the ceremony is held. There is also a secondary figure under the water drum less important than the one on the altar. These two are sugiliwas of the tug sib (Bangus).

Between 30 and 40 men are present when we arrive in the early afternoon. [535] [533] [534] They are singing and half-walking, half-dancing around the water gong counter-clockwise. The gong keeps up a steady boom-boom-boom with few interruptions even when new beaters relieve those who are tired. The men drop out from time to time to smoke or to chat so that no more than half are dancing while we are there. Later on in the evening we are told this is not so; everyone is dancing almost continuously. But the sun was hot and there were still many men to come so it was being taken easily. Men from all of the Hongwum sibs are present and also a few men of Koriasi and [703] [178] [554] Koriasi Tangvishamp. Only four of these were "eavi talks". These four, however, were the regalia of a homicide which seems to point to the fact that killing for prestige still goes on in spite of government prohibitions. [726] These men may have won their letter in the prearranged fight with a small hamlet of Koriasi about three years ago. Six of the latter, four of them women and children, were killed then. (We haven't got this story straight yet for we have only recently stumbled on it).

000 yet for we have only recently stumbled on it).

796 While John was joining in and trying to learn the dance step and songs
123 (which amused but did not anger the men) I sat in the house tamberan with
534 the older men and those not dancing and tried my skill with the wooden
trumpets. These are blown sporadically as are the flutes, and as the
[177] ordinary gongs are beaten. The trumpets have an interesting history. They
were captured from men from Avatip (on the Sepik below Malu) by the
grandfathers of the present older generation. They are finely carved wooden
cornucopias with a crocodile head motif at the closed end. The lip-piece
is on the side. I blew it quite easily the first time, but the men seem
[614] to make very hard work of it. The trumpets are now in the custody of
Kumbime sib.

796 In the late afternoon the men began to drop out to ornament themselves
in earnest. One man joined the dance with a man-killing spear, and the
[123] others increased the tempo. At about this time we began to get the feeling
that we were not wanted much longer, so when a couple of the men picked up
the two brace of yams and coconuts which had been given us, we took the hint
and headed for home.

128 These bare outlines of what we are doing and finding are becoming less
and less satisfactory. We know that it's the details that interest the
anthropologist, but to record all of same in this would be too long a task.
So we will skip over many of our notes on the last ceremony and become
796 impressionistic. At these ceremonies which we have seen so far, there
[171] has been nothing to compare with the amounts of food assembled for
Melanesian and Polynesian feasts. Everyone has a good meal and perhaps
a little left over, but one pig is made to go a long way. Another thing
which has struck us is the monotony of their singsings. There seems to be

796 keen enjoyment but no abandon--in what we have seen. We can see how the steady hour-long sound and movement would prepare the group to go out and spear a few of the out-group; we could feel a little of this ourselves.

796 123 We were told repeatedly that what we had seen at this ceremony was to be kept to ourselves; we were not to tell our house-monkis or any men who were not initiates. Of course women could not be told either. The younger boys were much impressed by our attendance. They were amused but a little shocked when John told them that the noise of the big gong was only a bullamukay. The savi talks however thought this a good explanation.

796 123 183 My 'monki', Gwiyap, also reminded me that I couldn't say anything about the affair to a non-initiate, for the knowledge alone is supposed to cause sickness and death; and then proceeded to outline the whole ceremony for me! He said that when his father was near death, he had told him all about this and other ceremonies and had told him that there was nothing to fear; men, not spirits, ruled this singsing. Another crack in the 'cake of custom'.

114 Our boy, Mar (see Dec. 9, 1936), is now well on the road to recovery. The snake has been 'raused' from his belly he believes, and his strength is slowly returning. He is very much quieter than when we first knew him, although he may be merely making the most of his convalescence to avoid work. We have taken on another lad from Yambon in the meantime, so we will not have to lose our tempers in order to have a good supply of firewood and water.

657 179 Max Mann, our good friend the young Medical Assistant of Ambunti, came here on the annual medical patrol on the 12th. This was a welcome break for us and for him too. He is not underworked by any means, having about 100 in his "house sick" to look out for and many patrols to make as well. His visit stirred up the people here as it always does, but after waiting

619 The land (both mountain and surrounding sago swamp) of the Hongwom
423 people is divided into various large sections which belong to either
631 Wanyi, Hayemakwo, or Tug. These sections are not contiguous, and are
614 specifically bounded by marked trees, rocks, streams, etc. These sections
are further divided into subsections owned by brother, real or classificatory.
[428] Land is passed on to son, or brother's son or mother's brother's son.

241 From this land, the people, working in family groups, get a living.
[262] There are two food products which stand far above all others in dietary
[462] importance, sago and yams. Both sexes and the children work in the planting,
cultivation, and harvesting of these crops, but only men can wash the sago
pith and plant the yams. There is no season for this or for any other of the
food products. Yams are planted on the steep side hills, the tops of
trees first being lopped off and burned. The breaking of the ground is done
with a digging stick. Dry taro, coconut, spinach, banana and recently
222 corn and melons are also cultivated. Beside these food products the leaves
262 of several wildgrowing trees and shrubs, and various berries are eaten.

224 Hunting is quite secondary. Pigs which are the most important of hunted
[796] animals are usually speared only in preparation for a feast, or, if
killed at other times call for a special pig-eating feast.
[223] Cassowarys are also killed by speering, but to bag one is a rare event.
Smaller birds are very rarely shot with a bow and arrow. Snakes and
[95?] lizards are a delicacy supplied by the young boys who either shoot them
222 with a bow and arrow or club them. A large grub which feeds on the sago
palm is a particular delicacy. Neither a man nor his parents may eat the
262 yams he has planted or an animal or bird he has killed. It is thought
826 that the man's blood goes into these food products, and that a man, eating
439 his own blood will die. Fish are obtained by trade and a few caught. Pigs
226 and dogs are domesticated.
231

Gongs

534 [796] [202] 534 322 [412] [192] Gongs, used particularly at the yam cult ceremonies, are also used for calling people and signaling. Any given person may be called on the gongs by beating the signal of his father's sib followed by that of his mother.

In making a gong, the figure head is worked first and then the body is shaped. Very little wood is taken off as a large gong is desirable. The center is chipped out with a long handled chisel (yonkwo) and the sides scraped down with a scraper (asf). The scraper is worked by two men. One standing who pulls the scraper up and down, while the other stoops holding the scraper tight against the wood. While this is being done, the gong is sounded every once in a while to determine the thickness of the planking.

533 [192] Gong rhythms (ka represents left hand intermediate beat; gadgag represents low gong; gadgag represents middle gong; gading represents high gong.)

nokwo ?af

ka danga ka danga

donga donga danga gading

donga donga danga gading

dong gadong gading gadang

dong gadong gading gadang

nawrdnjo

gadang gadong gading

Ornaments

301 Basic to the ornaments worn is a netted base (sawfud) onto which shells
286 are tied and sewn with bark string. The netting is from 4 to 11 rows wide,
287 narrowing on the ends. (Two of these net bases are required in bride price).
192 Shells , yesi (small cowrie shells) and asfmangfrf (larger ones), obtained
[583] by trade with the River people, are used for decoration in addition to their
[439] function as money.
[436]

The figure below , an ornament called nd mayfkf (crocodiles head) is made from shells attached to the net bag.

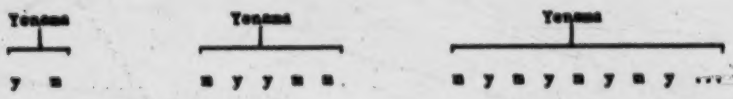
[562] An ornamented net bag for men worn only on ceremonial occasions is
[796] decorated with clam shell rings (amfngurf), shell ornaments (wanyivf) ,
yesi , asamangfrf and lofu wafi (small turks heads made of wicker work).

[561] There are various types of hair ornaments which are privilege marks
[703] for the various age-grades; others are distinguishing homicidal insignia.
The long tail feathers of the bird of paradise (mano) are the most highly prised for ornamentation. They can only be worn however by a man who has
[858] killed a man or woman (taken a head) from another place. Children can wear gouria pigeon and cockatoo feathers, and wooden combs, but not the mapo.

301 A kind of plaited work covers one wooden 3-pronged comb. The comb is
[561] only worn by those who have passed the second age grade ceremony. The white
301 plume (not the tail feather) of the bush fowl (afo fokw) is attached
237

Moieties

616 Normally if a man belongs to Yenama, his oldest son will be Minjama, his next oldest Yenama, and so on. If however, there is a preponderance of members in either moiety this is adjusted by shifting the alternation. Examples follow of three men and their sons and their moieties.



The equality of the moieties can also be adjusted by buying a young man with a pig into the moiety whose numbers are low. Normally a man belongs to the moiety into which he is first adopted but if chosen by the elders as a good worker, may change if he gives a pig and can sing for a long time without sitting down or sleeping.

616 The mind suqwiyi (carved figures) at the yam cult ceremonies
532 associated with each moiety are for Yenama-- a number of small carved human
796 heads; and for Minjama, a full carved figure of a man and several small human
794 heads. These figures are exhibited by a member of the cult during the time of the ceremonies; at other times they are kept in the owner's dwelling.

796 Women belong as do their husbands. During a Yenama ceremony the
794 Minjama women turn their net bags toward the house tamberan; the Yenama women
616 turn the back of the bag toward it, so that the men at the other side of the
593 sib can tell their affiliations. A woman whose husband has seen both
786 ceremonies is permitted to turn her bag either way. Men of Minjama have
[837] intercourse with women of Yenama while their husbands are attending the ceremony, and vice versa.